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Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 29B, Department of Operational Support, and section 36, Staff assessment

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 71/278, 71/297 and 72/262 A.

In paragraph 10 of its resolution 71/278, the General Assembly underscored that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse should be at the core of the United Nations efforts, throughout the United Nations system, in implementing the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. In paragraph 11 of its resolution 71/297, the Assembly welcomed the steps taken to introduce victims' assistance support functions at Headquarters and in the field. In addition, the Assembly, by its resolution 72/262 A, approved the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018.

As the resources were approved for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018 only, the present report proposes resource requirements for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019, in an additional amount of $836,100 net ($930,200 gross).

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I. Introduction

1. In his report entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach" (A/71/818 and A/71/818/Corr.1), the Secretary-General set out a four-pronged strategy to improve the Organization's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse: (a) putting the rights and dignity of victims first; (b) ending impunity for those guilty of sexual exploitation and abuse; (c) building a multi-stakeholder network to support the United Nations effort to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse by engaging more directly and continuously with civil society, as well as with external experts and organizations; and (d) reorienting the United Nations approach to strategic communications to raise awareness worldwide regarding the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse, to address the stigma and discrimination that victims face and to promote the United Nations as a global platform for sharing best practices in prevention and response. The centrepiece of the Secretary-General's strategy is elevating the voice of victims and putting their rights and dignity at the forefront of United Nations efforts in that context.

2. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 71/278, the General Assembly underscored that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse should be at the core of the United Nations efforts, throughout the United Nations system, in implementing the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. The Assembly also encouraged the Secretary-General to strengthen coordination across United Nations entities in order for victims to receive immediate basic assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs.

3. In paragraphs 11 and 12 of its resolution 71/297, the General Assembly welcomed the steps taken to introduce victims' assistance support functions at Headquarters and in the field, and emphasized the importance of providing expeditious support to victims, as well as the need to identify gaps and lessons learned and to develop recommendations for an integrated system-wide approach in accordance with its resolution 62/214.

4. In its resolution 72/262 A, the General Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as contained in its report on the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/7/Add.27), and approved the establishment of four positions in the Office (1 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)), funded with the application of a 50 per cent vacancy rate, under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018.

5. In its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/373), the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 12 of its related report (A/72/7/Add.27), questioned the appropriateness of the current proposed structure of the Office and noted with concern the unorthodox arrangement whereby the Advocate, a senior-level post funded through regular budget resources, was to report to the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, a temporary senior-level position funded through extrabudgetary resources. In its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1), the Committee, in paragraph 24 of its related report (A/72/824), recalled its concerns over the proposed reporting lines and structures.

6. In paragraph 14 of its report on the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/7/Add.27), the Advisory Committee reiterated

that proposals related to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the Office of the Special Coordinator should include full justification for any proposed requirements, taking into account all existing resources dedicated to dealing with sexual exploitation and abuse issues across the Secretariat, as well as at other relevant United Nations system entities.

7. Furthermore, in paragraph 24 of its report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/824), the Advisory Committee recalled that the General Assembly had approved the related resource requirements for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate for 2018 only, based on the Committee's recommendation, in view of the very limited information made available with respect to the staffing requirements. In paragraph 27 of the same report, the Committee recalled its recommendation that the Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his future proposals on the Office of the Special Coordinator and the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate, to indicate an optimal structure for the treatment of all matters relating to sexual exploitation and abuse and victims' rights, which should contain updated information on cost-sharing arrangements and the ongoing staffing and funding requirements, for consideration at its seventy-third session. In addition, the Committee considered that the existing reporting structures should be assessed at that time and any related adjustments should be included in the proposal. The concurrence of the Committee with the extension of the position of the Special Coordinator financed from extrabudgetary resources for the period from 1 February to 31 December 2018 was provided on the understanding that the above-mentioned issues would be addressed in the present report.

8. Currently, the four positions in the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the positions of Field Victims' Rights Advocate, referred to in paragraph 17 below, comprise the only positions focused solely on victims' rights and assistance among the available resources in the United Nations system related to the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse. Given the importance of ensuring the integration of a victim-centred approach into the Organization's efforts to eradicate this scourge, the Secretary-General is exploring cost-sharing arrangements for the Office through consultations with a number of United Nations entities. Cost-sharing arrangements for the Office of the Special Coordinator will be addressed separately in the next report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

9. Informed by the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly, the Secretary-General is putting forward a revised structure (see annex) under which the Victims' Rights Advocate reports directly to the Chef de Cabinet. This streamlines reporting lines to the Chef de Cabinet and reflects the distinct focus and mandate of the Office on assistance to victims and the realization of their rights, the centrepiece and cross-cutting element of the Secretary-General's strategy. The revised structure also takes into account the necessary linkage of the work of the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate with the work of the Office of the Special Coordinator, which is aimed at ensuring coordination and aligning efforts across the United Nations system in the implementation of the Secretary-General's strategy. The work of the Victims' Rights Advocate and her Office feeds into, and contributes to, the functions of the Special Coordinator and initiatives in the broader United Nations efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, focusing in particular on ensuring the integration of a victims' rights perspective throughout.

Role of the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate

10. The Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate is aimed at ensuring that an integrated strategic response to victim assistance and support is provided in coordination with United Nations system actors in the field and at Headquarters in

accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/214, which builds on initiatives described by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach" (A/71/818 and A/71/818/Corr.1) and his report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1).

11. The Victims' Rights Advocate works closely with Member States, government institutions, civil society, and regional and national legal and human rights organizations in both host countries and the countries of alleged perpetrators to build networks of support and to help ensure that the full effects of local laws, including remedies for victims, are brought to bear. Such networks are necessary to maintain updated information on judicial and administrative processes so that victims have access to those processes and their rights are protected in related proceedings. The Victims' Rights Advocate consults with external experts, advocates and legal aid organizations in the development of policies and tools to strengthen support for victims and realize their rights.

12. In his report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (ibid.), the Secretary-General outlined progress achieved to date in the implementation of his strategy and the zero-tolerance policy, including the activities and functions of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the four Field Victims' Rights Advocates.

13. Since her appointment, the Victims' Rights Advocate has consulted extensively with Member States, including in regional and other groupings, and with United Nations system and related entities, civil society and other stakeholders, in the field and other locations, to gather their perspectives on issues related to victim rights and assistance in order to inform her work to ensure that a victim-centred approach is institutionalized and integrated into all United Nations activities to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. Those consultations have also been aimed at identifying and sharing best practices to strengthen the development of any additional policies and tools.

14. The Victims' Rights Advocate convened a meeting on relevant mandates that address aspects of sexual exploitation and abuse, including the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, on Sexual Violence in Conflict and on Violence against Children, relevant special procedures mandates of the Human Rights Council and representatives of relevant United Nations entities. The discussion addressed possible synergies and complementarities among mandates, as well as best practices or lessons learned, including in ensuring that reliable gender- or child-sensitive pathways exist for victims or witnesses of violations to file complaints and that assistance to victims is rapidly and sensitively delivered.

15. The Victims' Rights Advocate conducted three field visits, to the Central African Republic in October 2017, to South Sudan in December 2017 and to Haiti in April 2018. The visits gave her a first-hand understanding of the progress made in integrating a victim-centred approach into the implementation of the Secretary-General's strategy on the ground. They also provided opportunities to discuss with, and provide advice to, the leadership of the missions concerned and representatives of United Nations entities on the ground, as well as other relevant stakeholders, on ways to strengthen inter-agency coordination and information-sharing with respect to victim assistance and support. The visits reinforced the efforts of relevant United Nations actors in this area. They also established a framework for improved collaboration across the system, including with existing inter-agency networks aimed at protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. The Victims' Rights Advocate met confidentially and individually with victims of sexual exploitation and abuse to assess

their enjoyment of rights and the adequacy of the support provided, and to hear their views and suggestions on the United Nations response to their situations.

16. A mapping of available assistance and support services available to victims is currently under way in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and South Sudan. Building on those efforts, and through collaboration with relevant United Nations entities, the Victims' Rights Advocate has initiated and is overseeing a system-wide mapping of victim assistance, including in non-mission settings, as requested by the Secretary-General.

Field Victims' Rights Advocates

17. Four Field Victims' Rights Advocates were designated in September 2017 from among existing personnel in the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan with the requisite experience and expertise to undertake these functions in addition to their other responsibilities. With regard to the financial period 2017/18, the Secretary-General absorbed the requirements relating to the Field Victims' Rights Advocates within the budgets of the corresponding peacekeeping missions. The Victims' Rights Advocate has guided the work of the Field Victims' Rights Advocates, who are carrying out new functions in the field, and has helped to shape their role, including by developing standardized procedures for coordination, reporting and information-sharing. The Field Advocates have become the main contacts for all victims on the ground and ensure, in collaboration with United Nations and other actors, that a joined-up victim-centred, gender- and child-sensitive and non-discriminatory approach is integrated into all activities to support and assist victims and is aligned across the missions and other United Nations entities at the relevant duty stations. Their role and work have been vital in bringing together United Nations and other actors on the ground to operationalize and implement victim-centred policies developed at Headquarters. Three dedicated specialized posts of Victims' Rights Advocate (P-5) were included in the proposed budgets for 2018/19 for MINUSCA, MINUJUSTH and MONUSCO and were approved by the General Assembly.[1]

II. Relationship of the current proposals to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

18. The current proposals relate to section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 29B, Department of Operational Support, and section 36, Staff assessment, for 2019, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

19. The objective, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement, external factors and outputs for the biennium 2018–2019, as set out in the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/373), remain unchanged.

[1] See resolutions 72/290, 72/260 B and 72/293, respectively.

III. Resource requirements

20. The present report proposes additional resource requirements for 2019, under the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 29B, Department of Operational Support, and section 36, Staff assessment, as summarized in the tables below.

Overview

Table 1
Resource requirements by budget section

(Thousands of United States dollars)

		2018–2019 initial appropriation	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
		1	*2*	*3=(1+2)*
1.	Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	119 854.0	772.5	120 626.5
29B.	Department of Operational Support[a]	163 664.7	63.6	163 728.3
	Net additional requirements	**283 518.7**	**836.1**	**284 354.8**
36.	Staff assessment[b]	494 902.8	94.1	494 996.9
	Gross total, all budget sections	**778 421.5**	**930.2**	**779 351.7**

[a] Pursuant to resolution 72/266 B, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, has been moved to section 29B, Department of Operational Support. The appropriation for 2018 is under section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, and the appropriation for 2019 is under section 29B, Department of Operational Support.

[b] Staff assessment amounts under columns 1 and 3 relate to all budget sections of the programme budget; the staff assessment amount under column 2 relates to budget sections under which additional resources are sought.

Section 1
Overall policymaking, direction and coordination

Table 2
Financial resources by component

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Regular budget

		2018–2019 initial appropriation	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
A.	Policymaking organs	37 692.5	–	37 692.5
B.	Secretary-General	2 429.1	–	2 429.1
C.	Executive direction and management	39 340.4	–	39 340.4
D.	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict	4 117.9	–	4 117.9
E.	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict	3 235.9	–	3 235.9
F.	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children	4 691.1	–	4 691.1
G.	Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services	6 995.2	–	6 995.2

	2018–2019 initial appropriation	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
H. Office of Administration of Justice	17 175.8	–	17 175.8
I. Ethics Office	3 674.9	–	3 674.9
J. Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate	501.2	772.5	1 273.7
Total (net of staff assessment)	**119 854.0**	**772.5**	**120 626.5**

Table 3
Post resources

Category	*2018–2019 approved established and temporary posts*	*Additional post requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised post resources*
Professional and higher categories			
Deputy Secretary-General	1	–	1
Under-Secretary-General	6	–	6
Assistant Secretary-General	3	1	4
D-2	9	–	9
D-1	16	–	16
P-5	32	–	32
P-4/3	66	2	68
P-2/1	5	–	5
Subtotal	**138**	**3**	**141**
General Service			
Principal level	14	–	14
Other level	78	1	79
Subtotal	**92**	**1**	**93**
Other			
Local level	8	–	8
Field Service	–	–	–
Subtotal	**8**	**–**	**8**
Total	**238**	**4**	**242**

21. The revised resource requirements for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate are reflected in table 4.

Table 4
Resource requirements by object of expenditure

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2018–2019 initial appropriation	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
Posts	–	706.8	706.8
Other staff costs	391.9	–	391.9
Travel of staff	88.0	53.4	141.4

	2018–2019 initial appropriation	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
Contractual services	8.5	8.5	17.0
General operating expenses	3.3	1.8	5.1
Supplies and materials	2.0	2.0	4.0
Furniture and equipment	7.5	–	7.5
Total (net of staff assessment)	**501.2**	**772.5**	**1 273.7**

22. The amount of $772,500 would provide for the conversion of four positions into established posts (1 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) and for non-post requirements to support the implementation of the mandate of the Office. The non-post resources would provide for the travel of the Victims' Rights Advocate and staff to peacekeeping missions and non-mission settings in order to assess the adequacy and availability of support for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as continued engagement on victim rights and assistance with Member States, United Nations entities, civil society and other stakeholders at other duty stations ($53,400), and other operational costs, such as contractual services, covering the standard cost of service-level agreements for maintenance support services ($8,500); general operating expenses, including communications services ($1,800); and supplies and materials, including stationery and office supplies ($2,000).

Section 29B
Department of Operational Support

23. The revised resource requirements for the Department of Operational Support are reflected in table 5.

Table 5
Resource requirements by object of expenditure

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2018–2019 initial appropriation[a]	*Additional requirements for 2019*	*2018–2019 revised estimates*
Posts	60 076.7	–	60 076.7
Other staff costs	4 672.6	–	4 672.6
Consultants	301.7	–	301.7
Travel of staff	170.7	–	170.7
Contractual services	4 462.8	–	4 462.8
General operating expenses	91 790.1	63.6	91 853.7
Hospitality	7.9	–	7.9
Supplies and materials	1 298.1	–	1 298.1
Furniture and equipment	690.1	–	690.1
Grants and contributions	194.0	–	194.0
Total	**163 664.7**	**63.6**	**163 728.3**

[a] Pursuant to resolution 72/266 B, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, has been moved to section 29B, Department of Operational Support. The appropriation for 2018 is under section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, and the appropriation for 2019 is under section 29B, Department of Operational Support.

24. The proposed additional resources under non-post items, amounting to $63,600, would provide for the rental of premises related to the four posts.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

25. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) **To approve the additional resources proposed in the amount of $836,100 (net of staff assessment);**

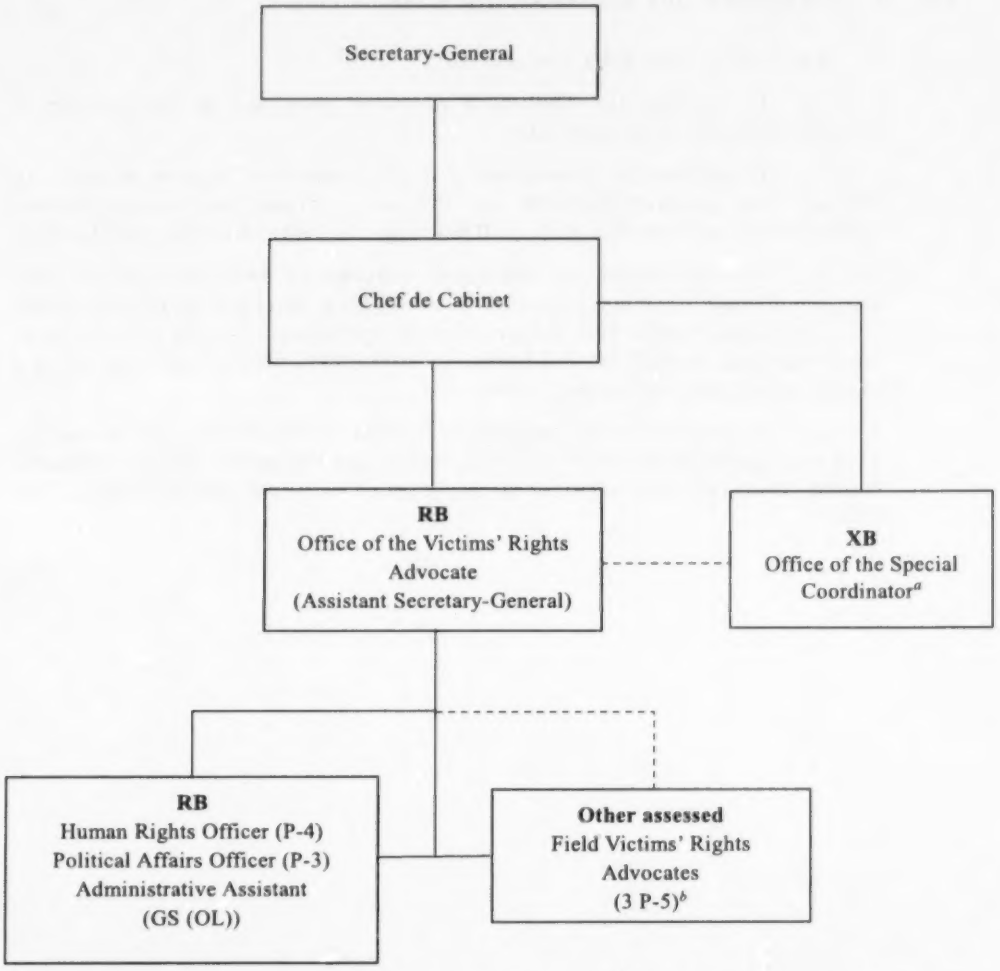
(b) **To approve the conversion of the four positions to posts, comprising one Assistant Secretary-General, one P-4, one P-3 and one General Service (Other level), under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination;**

(c) **To appropriate an additional amount of $836,100 (net of staff assessment) under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination ($772,500), and section 29B, Department of Operational Support ($63,600), of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, which would represent a charge against the contingency fund;**

(d) **To appropriate an additional amount of ($94,100) under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.**

Annex

Organizational structure



Abbreviations: GS (OL), General Service (Other level); RB, regular budget; XB, extrabudgetary resources.

[a] Mandate of the Under-Secretary-General, Special Coordinator, extended through 31 December 2018.

[b] Reflected under individual peacekeeping missions: United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.